

b.) Remarks

Claims 1-13, 15-39 and 41-53 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 8, 28, and 34 have been amended in various particulars as indicated hereinabove.

Claims 1, 8, 12-13, 16-22 and 48-49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ramsbottom (U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0179448). In a related rejection, claims 2-7, 9-11, 15, 23, 28-47 and 50-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ramsbottom (U.S. Pub. No. 2003/0179448) in view of Boppart (U.S. Patent No. 6,485,413). These rejections are respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Independent claim 1, for example, has been amended to describe that the two bores are adjacent to each other and that each of the optical fibers extends adjacent to each other. This clearly distinguishes the claims from the Ramsbottom system, which shows a coaxial design.

Thus there is not anticipation nor with the claims be obvious in light of the applied references.

Claims 24-27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Boppart (U.S. Patent No. 6,485,413). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Independent claim 24 requires capillary tube(s) having bores into which the optical fibers are respectively inserted. Boppart does not show such a feature.

Thus there is no anticipation with respect to this claim, either.

It is believed that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

By /grant houston/
J. Grant Houston
Registration No.: 35,900
Tel.: 781 863 9991
Fax: 781 863 9931

Lexington, Massachusetts 02421
Date: April 30, 2008